

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
U.S. Application No. 09/976,316
Attorney Docket No. Q66357

REMARKS

Pending claims 5-12 and 15 have been examined. Claims 9-12 and 15 are allowed. Claims 5-8, however, are rejected. Specifically, claims 5 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,404,028 to Hetrick et al. (hereinafter "Hetrick"). Claims 6 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Hetrick in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,683,591 to Offenberg (hereinafter "Offenberg").

In order to expedite prosecution of their application, without acquiescing in the propriety of the Examiner's rejections, Applicants cancel rejected claims 5-8 without prejudice or disclaimer, thereby placing the application in condition for immediate allowance with claims 9-12 and 15.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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